

Continue to offer small amounts of milk to your child. In time, your child's taste for milk may change. You can also try flavored milk.

My Child Drinks Milk by the Gallon

Drinking too much milk may cause a feeding problem. Your child can fill up on milk and leave little room in his/her stomach for food. Your child will then eat less. To prevent this problem, serve a small amount of milk after the greater part of the main course is eaten.

Help your child to sip, rather than gulp a beverage.

My Child Will Only Eat Pizza (or other food) and Nothing Else

A food jag is most likely to happen sometime in the life of your preschooler. To solve the problem allow your child to eat the specific food as long as it is wanted and is not junk food. Do not make a big fuss about this "food jag." Continue to offer a variety of foods at mealtimes and do not remove the "food jag." In a few days your child is likely to start eating other foods.

The eating behaviors of toddlers and preschoolers can cause concern. Some of the behavior problems can be linked to a nervous parent who just wants to have a healthy child!

Overeating, tension at mealtimes, and a poor parent-child relationship may occur if the behavior continues. Remember that your preschooler is not an adult and should not be expected to act like one.

Relax and Enjoy Your Child

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Eating Behaviors of the Toddler and Preschooler

As your baby becomes a child, your child becomes more of an individual. Eating habits and eating patterns may change. Feeding practices tend to fall into one of two categories:

- Failure to develop mealtime eating practices
- Refusal to eat a particular food

Let's Consider Typical Problems

Appetite decreases around two years of age

Your child is growing at a slower rate and does not need as much food. Continue to serve balanced food choices from the food guide pyramid. Be patient if your child's appetite decreases.

If you overreact and coax your child to eat, your child may react to the increased attention. Your coaxing may start a cycle — mealtime may become a battleground rather than an enjoyable learning time.

REMEMBER your child knows hunger and will eat when necessary.

Your child may go through what seems like a "no eat" phase. If you are concerned about your child's growth or health, talk to your health care provider.

Your “no eater” is best handled by simply not appearing to pay attention. Prepare and offer familiar foods at meals as usual. Gradually the “no eater” will get tired of not receiving extra attention. The “no eater” will become hungry and will become an “eater.”

My Child Won't Eat Vegetables

Often children do not like a specific vegetable or vegetables because of the flavor, texture or smell.

Some hints that may help increase your child's vegetable intake are:

Do not overcook vegetables. Overcooking may help develop strong flavors and make the vegetables mushy. It may also cause the color to become a lot duller.

Serve vegetables cooked just to the crisp stage. Cut in bite sizes after cooking to help preserve the nutrients.

Children like raw vegetables. Offer finger foods such as carrot sticks, green pepper rings and broccoli wedges.

Let your child help you prepare raw vegetables as a snack.

My Child Does Not Like _____ Food.

It is perfectly OK for your child (and you) to not like specific foods. Do not make a big fuss about it. This will help prevent food battles. Offer similar foods from the same food group. This will help your child get the necessary nutrients.

Mealtime is Fine as Long as the Meat is Hamburger

Your child may enjoy hamburger more than other meats just because it is easier to chew. Your child may chew and chew and not seem to be able to swallow. Your child's chewing ability may not be as advanced as you think it is.

If this happens, try these serving tips:

Offer other easy-to-chew and soft protein-rich foods like chicken, fish, eggs, dried beans and peanut butter.

Use mild seasonings.

Cut meat into bite-size portions that can be eaten with fingers.

My Child Will Not Chew

This often occurs when a child is kept on strained foods for too long. To develop the ability to chew may take time and patience.

A few tips that may help you are:

- If your child will chew a cookie, use this as a starting place. Gradually introduce a more crispy and chewy food like apple wedges.
- Serve a larger piece of food than you would normally serve. Let your child bite off a little at a time.
- Start the meal with something that must be chewed. As your child tires, familiar and softer foods may be used to complete the meal.

My Child Will Not Drink Milk

If your child does not like milk in liquid form, try serving it in different ways such as

- puddings
- creamed soups
- custards
- with cereals
- cheese in a sandwich.
- in main dishes (macaroni with cheese)
- sauce on vegetables
- cheese snack with crackers or fruits and vegetables
- yogurt

